

Everglades National Park



People have occupied the “River of Grass” region of Florida for at least 12,000 years. Paleo-Indians lived in a somewhat drier environment, but adapted as the climate changed and wetlands emerged. Human life expanded over the next 10,000 years, as evidenced in the archaeological record. Tool and pottery manufacturing techniques advanced, and the people began coming into contact with, and trading with, people of other cultures.

By the time Europeans arrived, there were five distinct tribes flourishing in what is now southern Florida. Between the Tequesta, Calusa, Jeaga, Ais, and the Mayaimi, there were approximately 20,000 people inhabiting the area when the Spanish arrived in 1513.

The next 350 years would see conflict between these indigenous people and the Spanish, and later, the English and Americans. By the 18th century, Creeks and Seminoles were the predominant cultures in the region. In the 19th century, 40 years of war between the United States and the Seminoles forced many native people to take refuge in the Everglades, in order to escape removal from Florida. Seminoles and other tribes have since made the Everglades an important part of their culture.

Today, you can visit Everglades National Park and experience a unique environment that has had a tremendous effect on many peoples’ ways of life.

To learn more, visit: [**www.nps.gov/ever/**](http://www.nps.gov/ever/)